



AOT in Action

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from Director Sherry Henry:

Good afternoon,

I hope everyone had a wonderful weekend and took a moment to recognize the 98th anniversary of Arizona's statehood on Sunday!

Speaking of Arizona's statehood, there are only two more years until the Grand Canyon State is officially a centenarian. Is your community ready to celebrate?

This week I'll be attending the Governor's Centennial Summit to hear about the signature projects and events being planned by the Arizona Centennial Commission, in collaboration with the Arizona Historical Advisory Commission. Many community members from across the state such as Arizona's Congressional Delegation, Tribal Councils, State Legislators, Officials and State Agency Directors, County Board of Supervisors, Mayors and Councils will also be attending the event to share what their communities will do to commemorate Arizona's Centennial.

The Governor's Centennial Summit promises to be an exciting event and one that will help ensure that every community who wants to be involved in Centennial celebrations is involved.

To find out more about the Arizona Centennial Commission or how to participate in Centennial events, contact Karen Churchard, executive director of the Arizona Centennial Commission at kchurchard@azot.gov.

Have a great week.

AOT News

Arizona Office of Tourism Announces ATU Social Media Workshops!

The Arizona Office of Tourism is proud to present the next series of highly-informative Arizona Tourism University workshops. This next complimentary workshop series, titled **First Why, Then How: Creating a Social Media Strategic Roadmap**, will begin in March.

The series will be presented by Jay Baer, one of the world's most popular social media consultants and bloggers. He is the creator of the *7-step Social Media Strategic Planning Process* and the *Twitter 20* series of live Twitter interviews. An online marketing pioneer, he has worked with more than 700 companies - and 25 of the Fortune 1000 - since 1994.

Be sure to sign up today by sending your RSVP to ATURSV@azot.gov.

First Why, Then How: Creating a Social Media Strategic Roadmap complimentary workshops will be held from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. in the following locations:

March 10

[City of Flagstaff Aquaplex](#)

1702 N. Fourth St.
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

March 26

Glendale – details to be determined

April 9

Webinar – details to be determined

To register, send your contact information to ATURSV@azot.gov.

SAVE the DATE: 6th Annual Arizona Tourism Unity Dinner – Thursday, March 11, 2010

The Arizona Tourism Unity Dinner will be held Thursday, March 11, at Chase Field. The event is a major fundraiser for the Arizona Tourism Alliance, but also honors individuals for their extraordinary support and service to Arizona's travel and tourism industry. The Unity Dinner is a wonderful event that brings together public and private tourism industry organizations and elected officials from across the state to celebrate tourism. For ticket information, please visit www.aztourismalliance.org.

AOT Receives Award on Behalf of State

Sherry Henry, director of the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT), and Mark J. Stanton, AOT's deputy director, accepted the "Best Domestic Tourism Destination" award from Global Traveler magazine. Arizona was selected by readers of the magazine. This was a tremendous honor and a wonderful reflection of how the Arizona tourism industry has worked together to bring awareness of Arizona as an amazing leisure destination. Furthermore, those same readers selected the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa as one of the top ten Best Hotels in the Western

United States as well as The Boulders Resort as one of the top ten Best Domestic Golf Resorts! Congratulations to everyone for this wonderful distinction.

Upcoming Events & Activities

[Toronto Golf & Travel Show](#)

Date: February 26 - 28

Location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada

[UK Trade Incentive Co-op Marketing Program](#)

Date: March – April

Location: UK

[UK Media and Trade Mission](#)

Dates: March 8 – 12

Location: London and Manchester

[Arizona Road Show in Mexico](#)

Date: March 15 – 19

Location: Mexico City and Guadalajara, Mexico

Industry News

Yoga is in Demand

Like Wi-Fi, on demand movies and fitness centers, yoga is becoming an amenity many hotels and resorts just can't do without. Long popular in spas and retreat centers, yoga classes have been spreading to mainstream hotels, resorts and tour operators over the past several years. As the ancient stretching and meditation practice gained popularity, the travel industry began seeing dollar signs in sun salutations. Soon, yoga classes were showing up on the on-demand channels in Hyatts and Marriotts, and at the Kimpton hotel chain mats and straps were available to guests who asked. Spas and resorts began to tweak their yoga programs by hosting week-long retreats with yoga masters like Rodney Yee and Colleen Saidman, who attracted a cultlike following.

Now, with yoga becoming so mainstream, properties from chain hotels to bed-and-breakfasts are looking for new ways to incorporate it into their programs to pique guests interest and reach into their wallets. "Yoga is becoming a must-have amenity" on the order of Internet access, said Chekitan S. Dev, a professor of marketing at the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration. (*Page 3, New York Times, Travel, Sun; Travel Advance, Feb. 8*)

Airport Scanners Stir Fears Over Lines

The government's plan to install body scanners in dozens of airports could lengthen security lines and congest terminals, airline and airport officials warn. Scanners that look through passengers' clothing to find hidden weapons are significantly larger than the metal detectors they will replace. And they take at least five times longer to scan a single passenger. Steve Lott of the International Air Transport Association said scanners "would lead to significant passenger delays at the checkpoint." But the Transportation Security Administration said scanners will not significantly increase checkpoint lines. TSA plans to install 950 scanners at airports in the next two years, a move partly driven by the recent attempt to bomb an airliner near Detroit on Christmas Day. *(Page 1A, USA Today; Travel Advance, Feb. 9)*

Rainbow Bridge, Lake Powell Celebrates its Centennial

An arching stone bridge higher than the nation's capitol and nearly as long as a football field - Rainbow Bridge, the world's largest known natural bridge is celebrating 100 years of being a National Monument this May 30th. What better time is there than during the centennial celebrations and events to visit this natural wonder on the shore of beautiful lake Powell in the red rock desert of northern Arizona? Many Centennial activities including guest speakers on select dates from February to May have been planned by the National Park Service. Information is available at www.pagelakepowelltourism.com or by calling the Page Lake Powell Tourism Bureau at 1-888-261-7243.

Cities Using Destination Branding to Attract Visitors

"Destination branding" is back in vogue as cities and states pursue image makeovers designed to help them stand out in the weak economy, attract visitors and even lure people who might relocate. Some are adopting new themes. Others are recalibrating messages to portray themselves as an affordable place to visit. Among those that have launched rebranding efforts in recent years or are considering new campaigns, according to branding consultants: Fresno; Santa Rose, Calif.; Providence; the state of Virginia; Beaverton, Ore.; North Port, Fla.; Peekskill, N.Y.; Los Alamos, N.M.; Fairbanks, Alaska; Cleveland; and the state of Florida. For cities such as Dayton, Fresno and Cleveland, branding goes beyond tourism. It aims for a new identity that can stir local communities out of the economic doldrums. *(Page 3B, USA Today; Travel Advance, Feb. 12)*

Travelocity Poll Shows Traveler Confidence up in 2010

Travelocity's most recent poll shows a dramatic increase in travel intentions, indicating traveler confidence is on the rise. Travelocity's second Traveler Confidence Report reveals that nearly half of respondents plan to increase their travel in 2010 as compared to 2009. The report gauges travelers' plans and attitudes now as compared to six months prior and one year prior. Significantly more respondents (49%) plan to increase their travel in the year ahead, compared to 21% six months ago and just 10% in 2009. Another 44% plan to travel "about the same" as compared to last year. The number of travelers planning to decrease their travel is down significantly to 7%, compared with 34% one year ago and 24% six months ago. The findings are based on the intentions of more than 2,000 North Americans surveyed by Travelocity. *(www.TravelPulse.com, 2/10; Travel Advance, Feb. 12)*

Virtuoso Survey Finds Rebound in Lux Travel

A survey of members of luxury travel network Virtuoso finds that people are once again traveling and no longer deferring vacations, releasing some of the pent-up demand for vacations

that has been building since the economic downturn began. A recent poll of Virtuoso's high-end retailers found that 81% of them reported that their agency's future bookings were up compared to this time last year. Eighty percent say sales are up over the last three months and 55% say revenues are higher than this time last year.

More than half (54%) of respondents stated they believe both their leisure and corporate travel bookings will rebound in the next six months. International leisure business has been the most insulated against the economy, according to 39% of respondents. Virtuoso travel agency owners and managers were polled at five regional meetings during January and February. Details at www.virtuoso.com. (*www.TravelAgentCentral.com*, 2/11; *www.TravelPulse.com*, 2/11; *Travel Advance*, Feb. 12)

Calendar of Events

Visit www.ArizonaGuide.com to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

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